

[ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED]

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS AND RADIO NEWS BRIEFING MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1962,
12:20 PM EDT

MR. WHITE: Gentlemen, we have no releases; I have one little announcement:

The Department of State announced today acquisition of the historic Chateau de Prangins, near Nyon, Switzerland, to be used as the headquarters for the Secretariat and Staff of United States Delegations attending international conferences in Geneva. A wing of the building, overlooking Lake Geneva, will be reserved for use as the residence of the United States representative to the European Office of the UN and other International Organizations. That is our old pal, Roger Tubby.

The Chateau, unofficially valued at a half million dollars, was donated to the Department by Mrs. Katharine Dexter McCormack, Boston and Santa Barbara civic leader and philanthropist. The property -- about 12 miles north of Geneva -- was transferred to the Department as a gift on an absolute and unconditional basis October 8. Its acquisition now offers United States Delegations a conference area in a suitable, secure building, solving the problem of previous makeshift arrangements in leased quarters and hotels.

There is a full story on this in the upcoming issue of the Newsletter, and I am trying to get copies for you. Let's let this one be a desk copy.

Q. Tell me, what happened to Tubby's residence, or didn't he have one? Did he sell it, or what?

A. I honestly don't know. Maybe the story in this issue tells that.

Writers; a German Embassy buffet dinner for journalists -- I hope you are all invited. He sees Mr. Bundy at the White House tomorrow, and there is Ambassador Knappstein's dinner at 8 tomorrow night.

Q. Do you have the times of his appointments with McNamara and Bundy?

A. McNamara is at 10 tomorrow, and Bundy at 4 on Wednesday. He leaves Washington some time Thursday p.m., time yet to be determined.

Q. He came over to here from the Embassy for this planning session?

A. Yes.

Q. He alone, or with aides or Embassy people?

A. I don't know.

Q. How long was the session?

MR. PARR: It lasted roughly an hour; it might have been a little more.

Q. Link, do you have anything of substance today on what has been going on so far?

A. No, I don't think so, just that these discussions are covering a wide range of topics of mutual concern to the United States and the German Federal Republic.

Q. Link, has the State Department any comment on a New York Times story from the United Nations about an alleged Russian offer to barter Cuba for Berlin or vice versa?

A. Yes; we can't confirm these reports. I am surprised that anybody asks a question on the substance of it. Our general position on any such quid pro quo proposals was summed up best, perhaps, by the Secretary in a TV broadcast on September 30 when he said: "You cannot support freedom in one place by surrendering freedom in another."

Q. You say you can't confirm the reports, but can you confirm that

there was such an offer?

A. No, no; that is what I am talking about.

Q. In other words, no such offer has been made to the U.S.

A. Certainly not made to us, and if it were it would be kicked right out of the window so fast it would make your head swim.

Q. Link, do you have anything on this Soviet note that was handed over on the weekend on Berlin?

A. Yes. Since it has not been published, I will give you the essence of it on a BACKGROUND basis. Actually there were two notes delivered to our Embassy in Moscow over the weekend. The first, dated October 13, was a reply to our note of September 25 sent concurrently with identical notes from Britain and France, in which we pointed out the responsibility of the Soviet Union for the current tension in Berlin, and detailed a series of Soviet actions which have aggravated such tensions.

The Soviet reply baldly denies all responsibility for such tension, and accuses the United States -- we understand the British and French have received similar notes, so they are likewise, I assume, accused of being guilty of provocations which had been detailed in the Soviet note of September 5. You will recall that we had already exposed these allegations as being specious in our reply of the 25th. The Soviets said this time that these "provocatory actions will dangerously complicate the situation."

Now the second note, dated October 12, is a reply to our note of September 18, but their note is in fact a wind-up, or should I say an apparent wind-up -- to a long series of notes in which we have explained how the Berlin Allied Kommandatura has quite legally allowed a West German agreement with the United States on the airworthiness

specifications for imported aircraft to take de facto effect in Berlin. In the process of this long and tedious exchange, the Soviets have attacked the validity of the Kommandatura itself because the Soviet representative no longer participates in the Kommandatura. We have, of course, pointed out that the Kommandatura ~~will~~ has legal responsibility for Berlin. END BACKGROUND

~~XXXXXXXX~~ So about all I can say on the record is that we regard these two notes received from the Soviets over the weekend as sign-off messages, completing a long exchange.

Q. On both cases.

A. One would hope so.

Q. In their first note, Link, did they talk at all about these Four Power talks which the Allies have proposed in several notes which were a part of that series, I think, weren't they?

A. They did not.

Q. Link, could you spell out what is meant by the airworthiness specifications?

A. This gets technical, and you will forgive my oversimplification. There is an agreement between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany conforming to IATA for the airworthiness of airplanes in commercial air transport. This was made applicable to Berlin as a matter of administrative convenience, that is all, and since the Soviets have picked up their marbles and gone home; they just said there weren't no more marble games being played.

Q. When did this exchange start?

A. I can't give the exact date, but it has been going on for about three months.

C. And one final question, Link. This remark that these messages complete this long exchange, does that mean you are not going to answer both these notes?

A. We answered them in advance of the receipt of the latest.

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The correspondents were subsequently given the following information after a query on the sugar cargo in Puerto Rico:

The American Embassy in Moscow has received from the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Affairs a further communication concerning the sugar cargo which was on board the freighter Streatham Hill when it put in to the port of San Juan, Puerto Rico, in August for repairs. The question of the ownership of this cargo, which is claimed by the Soviet Government as well as by others, is now before the courts in Puerto Rico for determination. As suggested by the United States Government to the Soviet Government, the latter has taken steps to arrange for representation of the Soviet Government's interests before the courts in Puerto Rico. Last week counsel for the Soviet Government filed suit in the Federal District Court in Puerto Rico, with a view to establishing its ownership of the sugar and also claiming damages from the American judgment creditor who had the sugar attached.

In reply to a query on Robert Roy Budway, the correspondents were given the following: Following inquiries as to the whereabouts of Robert Roy Budway, our Embassy in Prague requested information on September 11, October 3 and October 6 from the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs. No reply was received from the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs until October 13, 1962. I will now read to you the Czech note, and our reply delivered October 13, 1962, in Prague: